



Mortals, Love, hit is right
covenable
That men ful dere bye thy
noble thing,
As wake abedde, and fasten
at the table,
Weeping to laughe, & singe
in compleyning,
And down to caste visage
and loking,
Often to chaungen hewe and contaunce,
Pleyne in sleping, and dremen at the daunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.

Jalousye be hanged by a cable!
She wolde al knowe through hir espying;
Ther doth no wight nothing so resonable,
That al nis harm in hir imagening.
Thus dere abought is love in yeving,
Which ofte he yiveth withouten ordinaunce,
As sorow ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.

A litel tyme his yift is agreable,
But ful encomberous is the using;
for sotel jalousye, the deceyvable,
ful oftentyme causeth destourbing.
Thus be we ever in drede and suffering,
In nouncerteyn we languisshe in penaunce,
And han ful often many an hard meschaunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.



Mortals, Love, I sey nat in
such wyse
That for tescape out of your
lace I mente;
For I so longe have been in
your servyse
That for to lete of wol I
never assente;
No force thogh jalousye me
tormente;

Suffyceth me to see him when I may,
And therfore certes, to myn ending/day
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

And certes, Love, when I me wel avyse
On any estat that man may represente,
Than have ye maked me, through your franchyse,
Chese the best that ever on erthe wente.
Now love wel, herte, and look thou never stente;
And let the jelous putte hit in assay
That, for no peyne wol I nat sey nay;
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

Herte, to thee hit oghte ynogh suffyase
That Love so hy a grace to thee sente,
To chese the worthiest in alle wyse
And most agreable unto myn entente.
Seche no ferther, neyther wey ne wente,
Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay.
Thus wol I ende this compleynt or lay;
To love him best ne shal I never repente.



Mortals, receyvethe this
compleynt in gree,
Unto your excellent be-
nignitee
Direct after my litel suf-
fisaunce,
For eld, that in my spirit
dulleth me,
Hath of endyting al the
soteltee
Wel ny bereft out of my remembrance;
And eek to me hit is a greet penaunce,
Sith rym in English hath swich scarsitee,
To folowe word by word the curiositee
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in fraunce.

ANELIDA AND ARCITE.
The Compleynt of feire Anelida and fals Arcite.
Proem.



Mortals, ferse god of armes,
Mars the rede,
That in the frosty country
called Trace,
Within thy grisly temple
ful of drede
Honoured art, as patron
of that place!
With thy Bellona, Pallas,
ful of grace,

Be present, and my song continue and gye;
At my beginning thus to thee I crye.

for hit ful depe is sonken in my minde,
With pitous herte in English for tendyte
This olde storie, in Latin which I finde,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite,
That elde, which that al can frete and byte,
As hit hath fretten mony a noble storie,
Hath nigh devoured out of our memorie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polymnia,
On Parnaso that, with thy sustres glade,
By Elicon, not fer from Cirrea,
Singest with vois memorial in the shade,
Under the laurer which that may not fade,
And do that I my ship to haven winne;
first folow I Stace, and after him Corinne.

Iamque domos patrias, &c.: Statii Thebais, xlii. 59.



Mortals, Cheseus, with werres
longe and grette,
The aspre folk of Cithe
had overcome,
With laurer crowned, in his
char gold/bete,
Hoom to his contre/houes
is ycome;...
for which the peple blis-
ful, al and somme,
So cryden, that unto the sterres hit wente,
And him to honouren dide al hir entente;...

Before this duk, in signe of hy victorie,
The trompes come, and in his baner large
The image of Mars; and, in token of glorie,
Men mighten seen of tresor many a charge,
Many a bright helm, and many a spere and targe,
Many a fresh knight, and many a blisful route,
On hors, on fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita his wyf, the hardy quene
Of Cithia, that he conquered hadde,
With Emelye, hir yonge suster shene,
Faure in a char of golde he with him ladde,
That al the ground aboute hir char she spradde
With brightnesse of the beautee in hir face,
fulfid of largesse and of alle grace.

With his triumphe and laurer crowned thus,
In al the floure of fortunes yevinge,
Let I this noble prince Cheseus
Toward Athenes in his wey rydinge,
And founde I wol in shortly for to bringe
The slye wey of that I gan to wryte,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious course of
vre,
The olde wrath of Juno to fulfille,
Hath set the peples hertes bothe on fyre
Of Thebes and Grece, everich other to kille
With bloody spres, ne rested never stille,
But throng now her, now ther, among hem bothe,
That everich other slough, so wer they wrothe.

for whan Amphiorax and Tydeus,
Icomedon, Parthonopee also
Were dede, and slayn was proud Campaneus,
And whan the wrecches Thebans, bretheren two,
Were slayn, and king Adrastus hoom ago,
So desolat stood Thebes and so bare,
That no wight coude remedie of his care.

And whan the olde Creon gan espie
How that the blood roial was broght adoun,
He held the cite by his tirannye,
And did the gentils of that regoun
To been his frendes, and dwellen in the toun.
So what for love of him, and what for awe,
The noble folk wer to the toun ydrawe.

Among al these, Anelida the quene
Of Emmony was in that toun dwellinge,
That fairer was then is the sonne shene;
Throughout the world so gan hir name springe,
That hir to seen had every wight lykinge;
for, as of trouthe, is ther noon hir liche,
Of al the women in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yeer of elde,
Of midel stature, and of swich fairnesse,
That nature had a joye hir to behelde;
And for to speken of hir stedfastnesse,
She passed hath Penelope and Lucrese,
And shortly, if she shal be comprehended,
In hir ne mighte nothing been amended.

This Theban knight Arcite eek, sooth to seyn,
Was yong, and therwithal a lusty knight,
But he was double in love and nothing pleyne,
And subtil in that crafte over any wight,
And with his cunning wan this lady bright;
for so ferforth he gan hir trouthe assure,
That she him trust over any creature.

What shuld I seyn? she loved Arcite so,
That, whan that he was absent any throwe,
Anon hir thoghte hir herte brast atwo;
for in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,
So that she wende have al his herte yknowe;
But he was fals; it nas but feyned chere,
As nedeth not to men such craft to lere.

But nevertheles ful mikel besinesse
Had he, er that he mighte his lady winne,
And swoor he wolde dyen for distresse,
Or from his wit he seyde he wolde twinne.
Alas, the why! for hit was routhe and sinne,
That she upon his sorowes wolde rewe,
But nothing thenketh the fals as doth the trewe.

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,
That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte,
Ne to no creature made she chere
ferther than that hit lyked to Arcite;
Ther was no lak with which he mighte hir wyte,
She was so ferforth yeven him to plesse,
That al that lyked him, hit did hir ese.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre ysent
That touched love, from any maner wight,
That she ne shewed hit him, er hit was brent;
So pleyne she was, and did hir fulle might,
That she nil hyden nothing from hir knight,
Lest he of any untrouthe hir upbreyde;
Withouten bode his heste she obeyde.

And eek he made him jelous over here,
That, what that any man had to hir seyde,
Anoon he wolde preyen hir to swere
What was that word, or make him evel apayd;
Than wende she out of hir wit have brayd;
But al this nas but sleight and flaterye,
Withouten love he feyned jelosye.

And al this took she so debonerly,
That al his wille, hir thoghte hit skilful thing,
And ever the lenger loved him tenderly,
And did him honour as he were a king.
Hir herte was wedded to him with a ring;
So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,
That wher he goth, hir herte with him wente.

Whan she shal ete, on him is so hir thoght,
That wel unnethe of mete took she keep;
And whan that she was to hir reste broght,
On him she thoghte alwey til that she sleep;
Whan he was absent, prevely she weep;
Thus liveth fair Anelida the quene
for fals Arcite, that did hir al this tene.